

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:AMB.PICKERING

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTONJR

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102566

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, XF, UNRWA

SUBJECT: UNRWA FUNDING

REF: BEIRUT 5610, BEIRUT 5456, AMMAN 2850

1. WE HAVE TALKED TWICE WITH JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER RIFAI ABOUT UNRWA FUNDING PROBLEM. RIFAI CONFIRMED REPORTS FROM JORDAN SOURCES THAT ARAB LEAGUE COUNCIL MEETING FAILED TO AGREE TO PROPOSED JORDANIAN INITIATIVES TO HAVE ARABS MAKE UP UNRWA DEFICIT TO UNESCO FOR UNRWA EDUCATION PURPOSES. RIFAI NOTED THAT HE HAD MANY FOREIGN MINISTERS IN AGREEMENT PRIOR TO FAISAL'S ASSASSINATION. HE THINKS FAILURE TO RESUME CONFERENCE WITH FOREIGN MINISTERS IN ATTENDANCE, AND WITH NERVOUS AND UNINSTRUCTED SUBSTITUTES
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AT MEETING, INSURED THAT MEASURE WOULD NOT BE PASSED.

2. RIFAI TOLD US HE IS NOW THINKING OF ALTERNATIVES FOR JORDAN. HE RECOGNIZES THAT IF SERVICES ARE CUT, HOST GOV-

ERNMENTS WILL HAVE TO PICK THEM UP IN ORDER TO AVOID SUFFERING WHAT HE CONSIDERS TO BE RATHER SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES IN TERMS OF INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES. HIS THOUGHTS RUN FARTHER; HE ASKED IF THE U.S. WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT TAKE ON NOT ONLY EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS BUT ADDITIONAL STEPS DESIGNED TO PERMIT GOJ TO ASSUME

FULL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REFUGEES IN JORDAN. THE OBJECTIVES WOULD BE OVER SOME STATED PERIOD OF TIME TO PURSUE A POLICY OF INTEGRATING THE REFUGEES INTO THE JORDAN ECONOMY. RIFAI LATER RAISED THE QUESTION IN A MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY WHERE IT WAS DISCUSSED GENERALLY. RIFAI THOUGHT THAT OTHER ARAB STATES WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROCESS, NEITHER WOULD THEY TRY, TO JORDAN'S DETRIMENT, TO BLOCK IT. RIFAI ASSUMES THE PROCESS CAN GO AHEAD QUIETLY AND BE PORTRAYED AS PART OF THE CONTINUING UNRWA FAILURE TO MEET ITS DEFICITS.

3. WE OF COURSE DID NOT GIVE RIFAI ANY REPLY TO HIS REQUEST FOR USG ASSISTANCE. INDEED, WE WOULD EXPECT SERIOUS PROBLEMS WERE WE TO ASK CONGRESS FOR FUNDS FOR THIS SPECIFIC PURPOSE. HOWEVER, WITHOUT DISCUSSING SITUATION WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS OR UNRWA, DEPARTMENT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ANY COMMENTS WHICH AMMAN AND BEIRUT AND OTHER INTERESTED POSTS MAY HAVE ON LIKELY IMPACT ON UNRWA AND HOST GOVERNMENTS WERE RIFAI'S SUGGESTION ACTUALLY TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY GOJ ON ITS OWN. THIS IS NOT A NEW IDEA ON PART OF JORDANIANS BUT IMPACT COULD BE LARGE ON BOTH JORDAN AND UNRWA TO SAY NOTHING OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA. KISSINGER

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